

Sept 2016 - Political Update

Aaniin kina weya. I encourage everyone to take several moments in your busy day and enjoy the incredible natural beauty that this season presents to us. The sights and smells of autumn will rejuvenate your spirit and ready you for the busy weeks ahead.

The month of September started off with a very productive regional meeting of the Northern Superior Chiefs hosted by Fort William First Nation. A number of issues were highlighted and discussed that are of interest to the region and the UOI departments will be providing follow-up on these matters. Chief Mel Hardy, recently elected from Rocky Bay was made welcome which also led to a site visit a week later at the UOI head office on Nipissing First Nation where Chief Hardy spend a few days meeting with each department and becoming familiar with the organization. This is a great opportunity to provide organizational orientation to newly elected leadership and we welcome others too to visit the secretariat.

In early September I travelled to Beausoleil First Nation to meet with Chief Mary McCue-King and her Council on beautiful Christian Island. We will continue to press for a resolve to their on-going ferry issue. That same week, after attending a Chiefs Committee on Health meeting, I met with newly elected Chief Joanne Rogers of Aamjiwnaang. We look forward to welcoming these newly elected leaders at the November Grand Council in Rama.

Thessalon First Nation celebrated the showcasing of their Bio Centre, an incredibly innovative approach to sustain cultural vitality, social equity, environmental responsibility and economic viability. DGCC Hare attended on my behalf as I was on bereavement leave that week. He also presented on my behalf at a regional TRC event on education at Laurentian University.

Water, housing and infrastructure are high priority issues for the Anishinabek Nation always; and an tremendous amount of time and energy was directed to these files throughout September as national and regional interests in First Nation housing and water were discussed. Our November Grand Council will provide a progress update on these very important matters.

Miigwech to the Anishinabek Nation Chiefs and their designate who travelled to Sudbury to attend the Anishinabek Citizenship Conference – we welcome the dialogue that must continue as we move towards our own citizenship laws and processes. We affirmed that no other entity should determine who is Anishinabe, only our families and communities have that right.

The political office is very involved with championing the ratification of the Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement – both myself and DGCC have visited a number of communities to encourage citizens to vote and say yes to AES. In addition to focussing on the AES, I travelled to present at a number of community celebrations and events throughout Anishinabek territory, I am so very proud of the accomplishments of all, there is so much to be grateful for in our world, we really ought to take more time to

acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all the leaders and staff within the Anishinabek Nation and the UOI Secretariat – we truly are making a difference.

The Ontario governments' recent throne speech created new mandate letters to each Minister. The political office has created a summary of references within the new mandates that may be of interest to the Anishinabek Nation, this summary will be sent to Chiefs under separate cover.

In all, September may be considered as a prelude to what is poised to be a very busy fall – we shall see you at any one of the upcoming events or assemblies. In the meantime, take good care.

Patrick Wedahseh Madahbee
Grand Council Chief